

## Contend for the Faith

You go to your mailbox, email, instagram, facebook or twitter, and you receive a message from Jude “exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.” What would you do? You are charged with a duty that requires you to engage a combatant. There are two terms that define the manner in which you respond: (1) Contend “signifies to contend about a thing, as a combatant” (“upon or about...a contest”). (2) The word “earnestly” is added to convey the intensive force of the preposition” (Vine’s). A combatant “A person who combats; any person who fights with another,” Combat being “To fight with; to oppose by force” (Webster’s)

How do you view your service to the Lord? As the Apostle Paul instructed the young evangelist Timothy to “war the good warfare,” Jude says to be a combatant, engage in combat, and be actively fighting in war.

The subject or cause, if you will, to which you are called upon to engage is the “the faith.” “The faith” is not a personal belief, but rather a conviction of religious beliefs. In the context of Jude’s epistle, he sites the reason for an immediate, and forceful response, i.e., “For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God unto lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 4): in brief, false teachers. The Apostle Paul told Timothy, they would come, saying, “But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power therefore. From these also turn away. For of these are they that creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth. Men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith” (2 Timothy 3:1-8). The Apostle Peter wrote “to them that have obtained a like precious faith” (2 Peter 1:1) that “among you also there shall be false teachers” (2 Peter 2:1). Jude says, “There are certain men crept in privily.” What would you do? Would you try to convince brethren to just be the best they could be and not make a big deal out of it? Or would you do as Jude commands, and contend earnestly? What would you do?

“And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garments spotted by the flesh” (Jude 22-23). Ross Triplett, Sr.